INTRODUCTION
The volunteer members of the Country Fire Service (CFS) are fundamental to emergency management in South Australia. Their value and importance is recognised and highly regarded by the South Australian community. Volunteers and the commitment they bring to the community through delivering professional fire and rescue services remain the core strength of the CFS. CFS Volunteers selflessly bring time and life skills to protect life and property, preventing and suppressing fire to create a safer community. They deliver professional fire, rescue and community services across South Australia and actively promote community resilience.

This Charter provides a framework for the commitment to protect the needs and interests of volunteers. It represents an agreement that the Government of South Australia, South Australian Fire and Emergency Services Commission (SAFECOM) and Country Fire Service (CFS) will commit to:

- consulting with volunteers and the Country Fire Service Volunteers Association (CFSVA) about all matters that might reasonably be expected to affect them, and
- considering their views when adopting or approving new practices and policies or reviewing current practices or policies.

The Government of South Australia is committed to working in partnership with the volunteer sector through the implementation of detailed provisions of the Laws and Regulations in the best interests of the CFS volunteers, the CFS volunteers community and the South Australian community.

The CFS is a community based fire and emergency service funded by the Government of South Australia. Their value and importance is recognised and supported by the Government of South Australia to meet its strategic goals. This Charter develops this partnership further for CFS Volunteers and the Government of South Australia.

The Government of South Australia supports volunteers by:
- ensuring safe and healthy working conditions for volunteers,
- ensuring that volunteer time is used to maximum advantage,
- ensuring that consultative mechanisms are in place,
- considering their views when adopting or approving new practices and policies,
- providing protection for volunteers under the Volunteer Protection Act 2001, and
- ensuring appropriate mechanisms are in place to enable consultation with volunteers and the CFSVA on all matters.

The Government of South Australia supports and recognises the role that volunteers play in our community. The Government supports the energy, dedication and enthusiasm of CFS Volunteers by providing support to emergency services. It provides appropriate facilities and equipment to ensure that members are trained and supported. The CFS Volunteers and the Government of South Australia meet their strategic goals. This Charter develops this partnership further for CFS Volunteers and the Government of South Australia.

The Government of South Australia supports volunteers by:
- recognising, valuing, respecting and promoting CFS Volunteers, their families and employees for their contributions to the well-being and safety of the people of South Australia,
- ensuring that relevant legislation appropriately recognises the needs and interests of CFS Volunteers who provide their services in accordance with the Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005,
- ensuring appropriate mechanisms are in place to enable consultation with volunteers and the CFSVA on all matters that might reasonably be expected to affect them,
- considering their views when adopting or approving new practices and policies,
- committing to developing active and positive communication networks and ensuring volunteers are kept informed and up to date with issues and their views accurately represented,
- ensuring casual employment is taken into consideration,
- ensuring appropriate mechanisms are in place to enable consultation with volunteers and the CFSVA on all matters that might reasonably be expected to affect them,
- ensuring their view is solicited, opinions and concerns are considered before adopting any new management practices, procedures or policies which might reasonably be expected to affect them as CFS Volunteers,
- recognising, valuing, respecting and promoting CFS Volunteers, their families and employers for their contributions to the well-being within the community,
- ensuring that consultative mechanisms are in place,
- ensuring volunteers’ views are considered in decision-making processes, and
- ensuring appropriate resources are provided to volunteers to ensure their safety, well-being and health is maintained.

The Government will:
- provide their services for the protection of life, property and the environment, prevention and suppression of fire, or when the need arises, provided by the Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005 regulations in the best interests of the CFS volunteers and the CFS volunteers community.
- commit to working in harmony and consultation with CFS Volunteers and the CFSVA about all matters that might reasonably be expected to affect them.
- ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place to enable consultation with volunteers and the CFSVA on all matters that might reasonably be expected to affect them.
- ensure volunteers’ views are considered in decision-making processes, and
- ensure appropriate resources are provided to volunteers to ensure their safety, well-being and health is maintained.

This Charter was written in consultation with the Government of South Australia, SAFECOM, CFS, CFSVA and CFS Volunteers and recognises that these parties operate in a mutually respectful and active partnership with the staff of the CFS, other organisations and the community.

This Charter builds on this agreement specifically supporting CFS Volunteers.

The South Australian Fire and Emergency Services Commission (SAFECOM) and the CFS are the organisations charged with the role of providing volunteer and paid fire and rescue services in South Australia. Their value and importance is recognised and supported by the Government of South Australia to meet its strategic goals. This Charter develops this partnership further for CFS Volunteers and the Government of South Australia.

Country Fire Service Volunteers

Role
CFS Volunteers are drawn from communities throughout South Australia to participate in an integrated fire and emergency service. This is a practical partnership based on mutual respect for the CFS. The staff, the CFS, and personnel of other organisations. It ensures that community safety needs are met to the best of their collective abilities.

CFS Volunteers depend on the goodwill and practical support of their families, friends, employers and local communities to enable them to serve, recognising that time available to them is limited by the needs and demands of their families, employment, and other obligations. CFS Volunteers value their time, and while they are paid for financial reward, but report to gain satisfaction from service, achievement, personal development and camaraderie.

Responsibilities
CFS Volunteers will:
- provide their services for the protection of life, property and the environment, prevention and suppression of fire, or when the need arises, provided by the Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005 regulations in the best interests of the CFS volunteers and the CFS volunteers community,
- consider their views when adopting or approving new practices and policies,
- ensure that consultative mechanisms are in place,
- ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place to enable consultation with volunteers and the CFSVA on all matters that might reasonably be expected to affect them,
- ensure their view is solicited, opinions and concerns are considered before adopting any new management practices, procedures or policies which might reasonably be expected to affect them as CFS Volunteers,
- ensure that consultative mechanisms are in place,
- ensure their view is solicited, opinions and concerns are considered before adopting any new management practices, procedures or policies which might reasonably be expected to affect them as CFS Volunteers.

This Charter builds on this agreement specifically supporting CFS Volunteers.

The South Australian Community Fire Service Volunteers Association

Role
The CFSVA is an association representing the interests of members of the CFS. It may take such steps as it may reasonably be available to it to advance the best interests of CFS Volunteers. The Association provides an additional mechanism of consultation and communication, and is a representative body for CFS Volunteers through its organisation structure and through the CFS and SAFECOM.

Responsibilities
The CFSVA will:
- fully represent CFS Volunteers to protect and progress their interests and welfare within the emergency services sector,
- ensure that consultation occurs with volunteers about all matters that might reasonably be expected to affect them,
- ensure their views are considered in decision-making processes, and
- ensure appropriate resources are provided to volunteers to ensure their safety, well-being and health is maintained.

South Australian Country Fire Service

Role
The CFS is a community based fire and emergency service funded by the government. It is dedicated to protecting life, property and the environment from fire and other emergencies in our metropolitan, regional and rural South Australia to meet its strategic goals. This Charter develops this partnership further for CFS Volunteers and the Government of South Australia.

Responsibilities
The CFS will:
- provide their services for the protection of life, property and the environment, prevention and suppression of fire, or when the need arises, provided by the Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005 regulations in the best interests of the CFS volunteers and the CFS volunteers community,
- consider their views when adopting or approving new practices and policies,
- ensure that consultative mechanisms are in place,
- ensure appropriate resources are provided to volunteers to ensure their safety, well-being and health is maintained.